Fresno County Public Transportation Gap Analysis and Service Coordination Plan

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PREPARED FOR
THE CITY OF FRESNO

FRESNO

RESEARCH REPORT

mobility PLANNERS

In association with: AMMA Transit Planning, The Rios Company and Transit Marketing LLC

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Purpose

The purpose of the Fresno County Public Transportation Gap Analysis and Service Coordination Plan effort (hereinafter referred to as the Gap Analysis and Service Coordination Study) is to qualitatively and quantitatively define where mobility gaps exist between public transportation and human service agency transportation and to develop specific coordination strategies to address the existing mobility gaps.

This Research Report brings together the analysis and findings of all data collection efforts and provides the basis for developing specific strategies to address mobility gaps in the next phase of the study. It provides significant information. The next section describes the specific methodologies and target populations that are a focus of the Research Report.

This Research Report is the culmination of Phase II of the Gap Analysis and Service Coordination Study. The next phase of the project will utilize these results to craft mechanisms and strategies to address gaps and barriers that are identified in this Research Report. Phase III will provide input from best practices in a peer analysis, a review of policies that might better facilitate coordination among public transportation and human service agencies, and provide a review of available funding sources and potential partners that might build on the strong array of existing mobility services available in Fresno County.

Research Methodologies and Populations

This report will synthesize findings from four market research efforts which explored the perceptions and experiences of different populations relevant to the understanding of transportation needs and gaps. The six market research methodologies and populations studied are outlined below.

Throughout this report, information from six sources will be combined around topical areas. The symbols shown next to each methodology will be used to clearly illustrate the source of the specific data or observation. The six sources of information are summarized below.

☒ *Survey of Transportation Disadvantaged Populations*

In-person interviews were conducted with 573 individuals at locations throughout Fresno County. The objective of the survey was to determine the characteristics of the populations most likely to be transportation disadvantaged due to low income, disability or other factors. The survey was designed to examine the demographics, attitudes and transportation behaviors of people likely to be more disadvantaged in terms of transportation options than the general population of Fresno County.

Interviewing these individuals by phone is impractical due to their high level of transience and use of prepaid cell phones (which cannot be sampled). The solution to this sampling challenge was to sample by cluster, defining "cluster" as locations at which people most likely to be at a disadvantage in terms of transportation would tend to congregate. A sample of clusters was developed by setting target quotas for urban and rural populations and having The Rios Company select sites appropriate to filling the target clusters. For the most part the locations at which surveying took place were rural and urban health or social service agencies serving lower income populations.

Interviewing was primarily conducted orally, except for at the Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC) where the survey was self-administered, with staff assistance provided as needed. Interviews were in the language in which the respondent was most comfortable. The Rios Company's bilingual speakers conducted the English and Spanish surveys. The Rios Company interviewers conducted surveys in other languages, such as Hmong, with the assistance of translators.

Prior to analysis, the data were weighted to reflect the urban/rural population distribution in Fresno County. In addition they were weighted to adjust for a disproportion in the sample caused by the great success of the CVRC staff in obtaining responses from clients; this resulted in the CVRC population comprising twenty-seven percent (27%) of the total sample. Population characteristics of the CVRC clientele have unique aspects that are not characteristic of the low income or general populations. It was estimated by the director of the CVRC that the total population with disability characteristics similar to those of CVRC clients might be approximately 15,000 persons, or 2% of the population. Thus the data were weighted to reflect that proportion statistically.

The resulting weighted sample is an excellent representation and very current of the populations with substantial unmet transportation need. The reader should keep in mind that the data presented represent percentages of the targeted population that tend to be of low income households. It does not represent the total population of Fresno County because that was not the objective.

A more detailed report of the survey findings is included as Appendix 1.

🗨 *Focus Groups of Transportation Disadvantaged Populations*

To provide qualitative context for the survey data, focus groups were conducted with three groups of individuals drawn from populations with significant transportation disadvantage. These included:

- American Indian Veterans (recruited and hosted by the American Indian Veterans Association)
- Spanish Speaking Adults from Rural Communities (recruited and hosted by Centro La Familia)
- Low income residents of Southwest Fresno (recruited and hosted by the West Fresno Family Resource Center)

Summaries of the focus group discussions are included as Appendix 2.

🧍 *Stakeholder Interviews*

In-depth stakeholder interviews were conducted with 45 individuals representing 28 organizations. These interviews were conducted by senior consulting team members with elected officials, city managers, social service managers and transportation managers. The focus of the interviews was on understanding awareness and perception of transportation services among these individuals, and exploring their views on transportation needs and gaps among their constituents. These findings were previously discussed in the Phase I Report which is provided as Appendix 3.

🏷 *E-Survey of Social Service Providers*

An e-survey was conducted of social service agency employees who work directly with clients to provide social, medical, legal or other types of services which focus on low-income, elderly, disabled and non-English speaking populations. More than 600 social service providers participated in the

survey which explored transportation needs, barriers, gaps and awareness. This population is relevant to this study as they are often referents and sources of information relating to transportation services. These findings were previously discussed in the Phase I Report (Appendix 3).

☑ *Inventory of Public Transportation and Human Service Agency Transportation*

An inventory of public transportation and human services transportation programs available in Fresno County was prepared, in terms of type and quantities of services provided to Fresno County residents. Information was drawn from the stakeholder interviews and the agency e-survey, supplemented by telephone and secondary sources research. The inventory includes a service description, the service areas, fares, vehicles used, ridership, and contact information. The inventory of public transportation and human service agency transportation is included in Appendix 4.

🌎 *Demographic Analysis of Fresno County*

In the Research Report and Appendix 1, there is reference to the 2010 Census and American Community Survey data. The demographic analysis was utilized in the research effort for two primary purposes: (1) assist with the location and distribution for the cluster sample for the survey of transportation disadvantaged populations, and (2) contrast the sample of the transportation disadvantaged population to the general population of Fresno County. The most important information is included in Appendix 1. Additional demographic maps that were utilized to assist with the cluster analysis are provided in Appendix 5.

Existing Mobility Services

☑ There is an impressive array of mobility services available throughout Fresno County. These include conventional public transportation, human services transportation and mobility management services which address the diverse travel needs of the target population. We will begin with a brief review of the transportation services currently available.

Public Transportation

Public transportation providers fall into several categories. The majority of trips are **Fresno County Metropolitan Area transit programs** operated directly by or on behalf of Fresno or Clovis – specifically the Fresno Area Express (FAX) services and the Handy Ride ADA paratransit program or the City of Clovis Stageline and Round Up services. The almost 14.8 million trips these programs provided in FY 2012/13 accounted for 88% of trips provided, using 39% of all 499 vehicles reported for public transportation services countywide.

Public transportation is provided in the rural areas through the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA), either as rural inter-city and inter-county services or as local rural community services. The *inter-city* programs of Auberry, Coalinga, Del Rey, Dinuba Connection, Firebaugh-Mendota, Huron, Orange Cover, Southeast Transit and Westside Transit provided 96,777 trips, 0.6% of annual trips provided but making important regional connections for rural Fresno County residents. Some operate infrequently; for example Auberry runs only on Tuesdays to Clovis and Fresno while the

Dinuba Connection to Reedley operates only in the summer. The other inter-county services operate every weekday while the Coalinga intercity service also runs on Saturdays.

FCRTA importantly supports *rural local community transportation* in fourteen Fresno County communities. The 373,834 trips these services provided in FY 2012/13 accounted for just 2.2% of trips countywide, while representing significant local mobility for residents of these small towns. The 28 active vehicles associated with these programs represent 5.6% of the public transportation fleet countywide.

Mobility Partnerships

An important mobility partnership is with the **CTSA services** – Consolidated Transportation Services Agency – operated by the Fresno County Economic Opportunity Commission (FCEOC). The partnership includes both human service agencies and public transportation provisions. The CTSA provides Head Start transportation for pre-school aged children; a CalWORKs night time service to transport enrolled CalWORKs participants to work or training between 6 pm and 6 am, 7 days a week; selected demand response transit services for older adults and persons with disabilities; and a contract with Central Valley Regional Center for their day program and supported employment trips for persons with developmental disabilities. These 440,000 trips provided by the CTSA represent 2.6% of the Countywide total, operating with a fleet of 95 vehicles, 19% of the countywide fleet. The CTSA is also responsible for the operation of 15 of the rural transportation systems under contract to FCRTA

Another important partnership is with CalVans which provides *vanpool services* in collaboration with FCRTA and Fresno County. CalVans operates a network of 48 farmworker vanpools and 127 commuter vanpools, representing over 1 million trips last year or 6.4% of countywide public transit trips. According to CalVans, Measure C provides $700,000 a year for the support of vanpool activities. An agricultural vanpool can receive up to $30 per day or $150 per week in subsidy support. A general vanpool group can receive $600 a month for the first year and $300 per month the second year. The San Joaquin Valley Air District provides $30 monthly vouchers for any rider in its eight county region. The vouchers are good for three years and represent a $1.2 million subsidy to San Joaquin Valley vanpoolers.

ValleyRides, which helps to match individuals with one another, promotes ridesharing and carpools to commuters and employer-based ridesharing programs. It also administers a taxi voucher program to subsidize the cost of taxis for older adults, a $20 book of tickets available to eligible seniors for $5.

Human service agencies are also providing transportation, beyond the programs of the CTSA, often in partnership with public transportation agencies. Other human service agency transportation generally falls into one of the three groups as depicted in Figure 1 below:

- Trips provided by public transit programs, such as FAX
- Trips provided by human services organizations, either directly or under contract
- Trips subsidized through agency support of public transit routes or purchase of bus passes
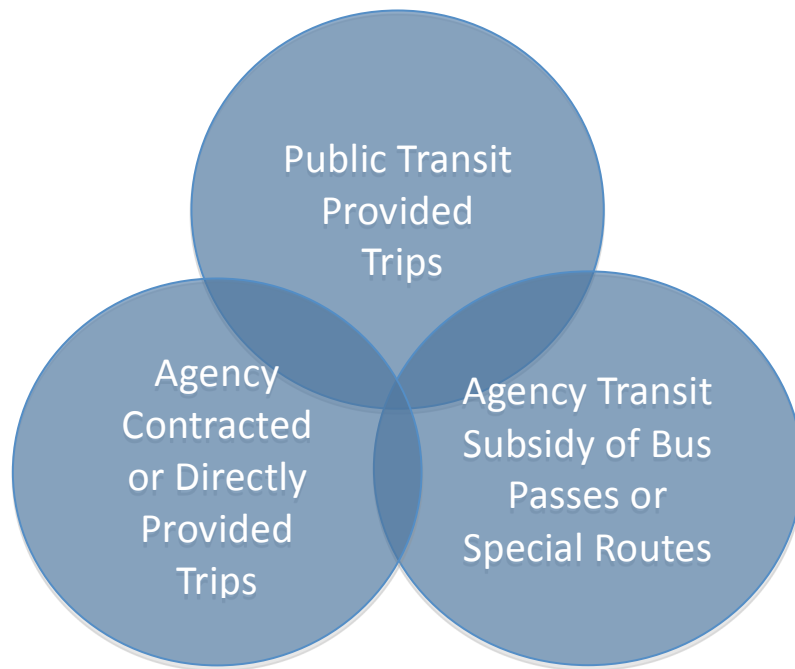
Some of the human services agencies in Fresno County *offer transportation through a contracted service provider or directly operate* a very modest level of transportation in-house to meet the immediate and short term needs of their clients. The Area Agency on Aging spends more than $50,000 per year under contract with FCEOC to provide transportation to and from five meal sites in Fresno County, while the Central Valley Regional Center's contract with FCEOC draws from a fleet of 58 vehicles to deliver 194,000 annual passenger trips. A list of other human services agencies that directly operate transportation services are:

- Arc of Fresno and Madera Counties – Transportation to day programs
- Adult Protective Services – Fresno County Department of Social Services – Life sustaining trips for dependent adults
- Disabled American Veterans – Veteran's medical transportation
- Health Net/Cal Viva – Door-to-door transportation
- United Health Centers – Medical center transportation
- Valley Center for the Blind – Field trip transportation
- Youth Leadership Institute – Transportation to training and social events

The most common transportation function of human services agencies in Fresno County is the *subsidy to provide clients with free bus passes*. A large agency such as the Department of Social Services is spending approximately $780,000 annually on bus passes and tokens to meet the mobility needs of the transportation disadvantaged while Clinical Sierra Vista reported spending only $4,500 per year on bus passes. A transportation subsidy is provided by Children's Hospital,

where FAX is given $100,000 per year to run a special express route from the Riverpark shopping center to the hospital. Additional human services agencies that provide a transportation subsidy include:

- Arc of Fresno and Madera Counties – Bus passes
- Central Valley Regional Center – Bus passes
- Fresno County Workforce Investment Board – Reimburses automobile costs
- Fresno Housing Authority – Bus passes
- Proteus – Gas vouchers for trainees

Inter-Regional Carriers

Greyhound, Amtrak's corridor services and Transportes Intercalifornias are other regional and inter-city transportation options available to Fresno County residents.

Amtrak operates twelve daily intercity San Joaquin trains that make multiple runs between the San Francisco Bay Area (or Sacramento) and Bakersfield, serving Fresno County at the Santa Fe Passenger Depot in Downtown Fresno. Amtrak augments the San Joaquin trains with an extensive system of thruway buses that have guaranteed connections at trainside.

Greyhound Bus Lines is the largest provider of intercity bus transportation in North America and offers multiple daily departures from the Downtown Fresno terminal to hundreds of possible locations nationwide. Greyhound fares vary depending on origin and destination. Discounted Greyhound tickets are available when bundled with Amtrak train ticketing.

Transportes Intercalifornias offers statewide intercity transportation, including three daily runs that originate from the international Mexican border cities of Tijuana and Mexicali to as far north as Sacramento, with multiple stops in between. Buses make stops in the Fresno County cities of Fresno, Firebaugh, Mendota, Dinuba, Kerman, and Kingsburg.

Transit Utilization Comparison with Other Metropolitan Areas

As discussed above, there is an impressive array of mobility services available throughout Fresno County that are well utilized by Fresno County residents. Trips per capita is a demand-side measure, providing a ratio of trips per resident to provide some indication of the volume of transit trips taken within the County. Fresno County's public transit services – combining fixed route and demand responsive programs – provided 17.9 transit trips per capita countywide. In the FAX service area, the figure is 28.4 transit trips per capita. For comparison purposes, the Bakersfield GET Bus service has 13.2 trips per capita, Sacramento Regional Transit has 15.5 transit trips per capita, and the Riverside Transit Agency has just 4.6 transit trips per capita. Fresno County public transportation services are very well utilized compared to other metropolitan areas of similar and even larger size.

Profile of Target Population

🌎 Fresno County, with a total population of 930,450, has a large percentage of individuals likely to be transportation disadvantaged. According to 2010 Census Data:

- Nearly one quarter (23.4%) of Fresno County residents live below the poverty level compared to 14.4% statewide.
- Nearly one in five (19.2%) residents speak English "less than very well."
- 9.1% of households have no vehicle. Of one-person households, 18.5% do not have a vehicle.
- 26.3% of the population is under 16 and 10% is over 65 years old.

🧍 According to stakeholders interviewed, a significant portion of the population relies on some type of assistance:

- Approximately 80,000 Fresno County residents receive food stamps.
- Approximately 125,000 residents are on MediCal. Children's Hospital of Central California reports that 75% of inpatients and 65% of outpatients are on MediCal.

In addition, these agencies report that many of their constituents have limited English proficiency. For example, California Legal Services estimates that 30-35% of their clients have limited English proficiency, while a City of Reedley representative stated that their city's 70% Hispanic population is largely Spanish speaking. Countywide, the Hispanic or Latino origin population is 50.9% compared to 38.1% statewide.

Survey Sample

❌ As noted previously, the survey of transportation disadvantaged populations was focused on individuals likely to belong to one of the groups described above and thus to suffer a transportation disadvantage. Respondents to the survey included individuals living in communities throughout Fresno and were diverse in terms of age and ethnicity. Following is a brief profile of the sample:

Community of Residence	N
Auberry	1
Clovis	42
Coalinga	20
Firebaugh	9
Fowler	4
Fresno	235
Huron	19
Kerman	21
Kingsburg	11
Mendota	14
Orange Cove	13
Other	10
Parlier	45
Reedley	60
San Joaquin	10
Sanger	28
Selma	31

- 32% are employed full time or part time, 16% of respondents were students, and 57% were neither employed nor students.
- 60% of respondents were female, 40% male.
- 40% of respondents were 35 or younger, 33% were 35-59 and 27% were 60 or older.
- Respondents included a cross section of ethnicities including 46% Hispanic/Latino, 19% Asian, 18% Caucasian/White, 10% African American/Black and 6% Native American.
- Respondents included individuals who speak a variety of languages – 52% English, 26% Spanish, and 16% Hmong – and who have varying levels of proficiency with English – 61% speak English very well, 16% well, 8% not well and 15% not at all.

One of the primary factors which characterize the transportation disadvantaged population is their low income. The income level of the survey sample was quite low compared to the general

population. This fact is illustrated in the chart below which compares the income distribution of Fresno County's population (beige area) to that of the survey sample (blue line).

Figure 2 Income of Survey Sample Compared to Fresno County Population

	Less than $10,000	$10,000 to $14,999	$15,000 to $24,999	$25,000 to $34,999	$35,000 to $44,999	$45,000 to $54,999	$55,000 to $74,999	$75,000 or more
5 Year ACS Fresno Co family income	7%	6%	14%	12%	10%	8%	14%	29%
Q33. What is your total annual household income?	41%	17%	15%	9%	9%	4%	3%	3%
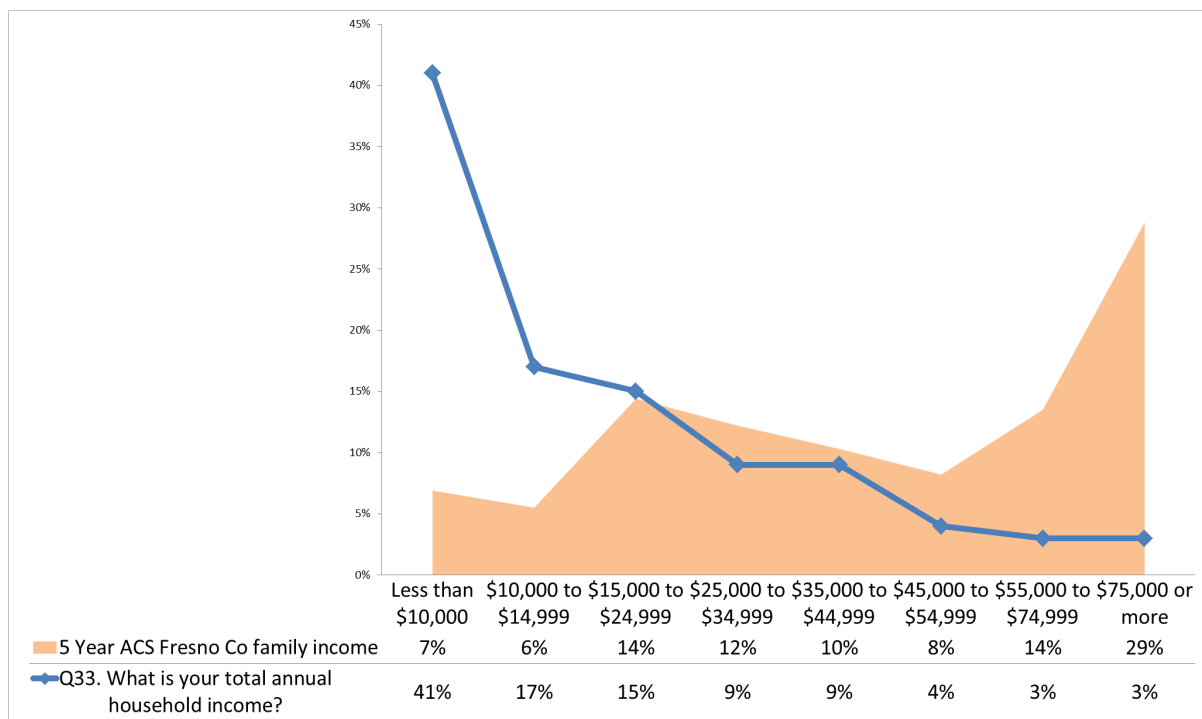
The majority of survey respondents (58%) had annual household incomes of under $15,000 compared to only 13% of the overall population that fall into this very low income group.

Figure 3 Income differences between Rural and Urban Residents

Rural/Urban Income Levels

	Survey - Rural	Survey - Urban	ACS - Rural	ACS - Urban
$75,000 or more	0%	3%	26%	26%
$35,000 to $74,999	8%	18%	32%	30%
$25,000 to $34,999	7%	9%	13%	12%
$15,000 to $24,999	18%	15%	15%	14%
$10,000 to $14,999	18%	17%	7%	7%
Less than $10,000	47%	39%	7%	10%
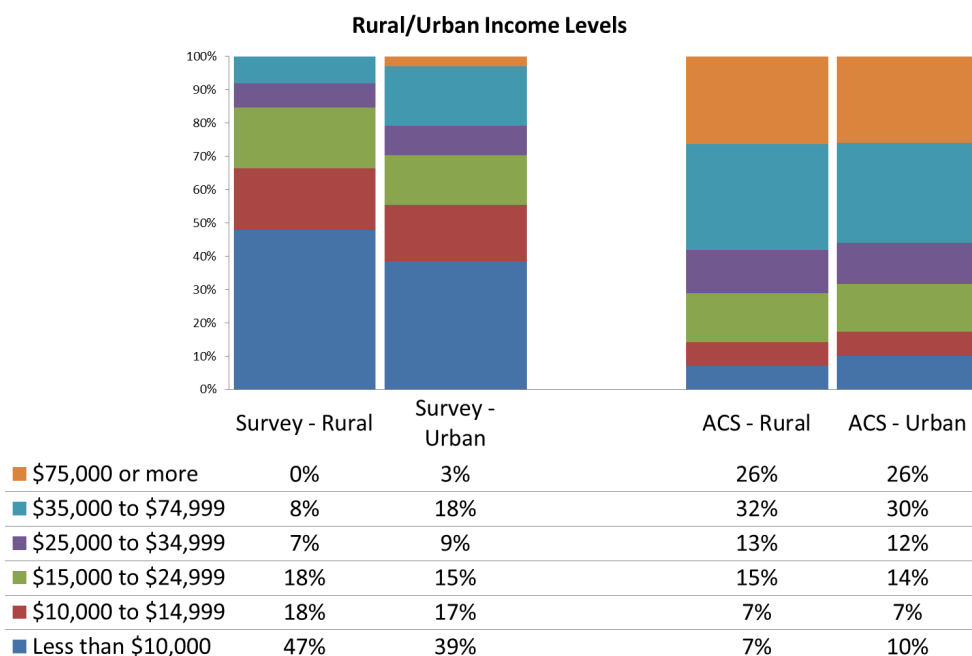
Fresno County's population includes two distinct segments – those who live in the Fresno-Clovis urbanized area and those who live in the widely dispersed rural communities. The chart above compares the income distribution of rural and urban residents both from the survey sample and from the American Community Survey for the Fresno County population. Incomes are relatively comparable for the two populations within the County, with urban residents somewhat more likely to be in the lowest income category. Within the survey sample, rural residents were more likely to be in the lowest income category and less likely to have incomes above $35,000. However, it is clear that there are significant low income populations in both rural communities and the Fresno-Clovis urban area.

Travel Patterns of Target Population

☒ Survey respondents were asked their community of residence, where they travel for work or school (if applicable) and where they most recently traveled for medical services. This section will address the travel patterns for these two critical types of trips.

The chart at the right looks at the distribution of work or school destinations among rural and urban respondents, and for the total weighted sample.

If we look at only the rural respondents who are employed or students, we find that the vast majority of work and school destinations are NOT in the urban area but in various other communities throughout the county. The largest concentrations of work and school destinations are in Parlier (21%) and Auberry (18%) for these rural respondents.

Figure 4 Destinations

Q15. Work or School Destination			
	Rural Respondents	Urban Respondents	Total Sample
Fresno	14%	79%	60%
Clovis	0%	9%	6%
Auberry	18%	0%	5%
Coalinga	1%	0%	0%
Firebaugh	2%	0%	1%
Fowler	1%	0%	0%
Huron	6%	1%	3%
Kerman	5%	1%	2%
Kingsburg	1%	0%	0%
Mendota	4%	1%	2%
Orange Cove	4%	0%	1%
Parlier	21%	1%	7%
Reedley	5%	1%	2%
San Joaquin	5%	3%	4%
Sanger	7%	1%	3%
Selma	4%	0%	1%
Other	3%	2%	2%

Figure 5 Medical Destinations

The table at the right shows the distribution of destinations for the respondent's most recent medical appointment – for urban respondents and rural respondents.

Urban respondents get their medical care at locations throughout the Fresno-Clovis urban area, with destinations somewhat concentrated in downtown and Northeast Clovis.

On the other hand, rural respondents are most often (62%) getting their medical care outside of Fresno. Reedley (19%), Selma (15%) and Coalinga (12%) were the most often cited rural locations.

This finding indicates that rural health clinics are somewhat reducing the need for individuals to travel to Fresno. However, most specialty care is still likely to occur in the urban area and in fact 39% of rural respondents said their last medical appointment was in Fresno-Clovis, mostly (23%) in downtown Fresno.

🔖 In the e-survey of Social Service Workers, the need for transportation to medical appointments in Fresno was the most frequent transportation challenge for clients in rural areas. It was cited as a need for some to all of their clients by 60% of the social service respondents.

Q17. Medical Destination			
	Rural Respondents	Urban Respondents	Total Sample
Downtown Fresno	23%	27%	26%
NE Fresno	5%	28%	23%
NW Fresno	1%	16%	13%
SE Fresno	3%	12%	10%
SW Fresno	4%	8%	7%
Clovis	4%	8%	7%
Reedley	19%	0%	19%
Selma	15%	0%	15%
Coalinga	12%	0%	12%
Parlier	7%	0%	7%
Kerman	6%	0%	6%
Sanger	5%	0%	5%
Orange Cove	5%	0%	5%
Firebaugh	4%	0%	4%
Kingsburg	4%	0%	4%
Hanford	4%	0%	4%
Huron	4%	0%	4%
Mendota	3%	0%	3%
Dinuba	2%	0%	2%
Fresno	2%	0%	2%
Madera	2%	0%	2%
San Joaquin	1%	0%	1%
Other	1%	0%	1%

The need for transportation to jobs, college and training programs in Fresno was nearly as prevalent. 52% of e-survey respondents said that transportation to jobs in Fresno is a need for some to all of their clients, while 48% said that transportation to college or training programs was a need.

While the survey of transportation disadvantaged populations shows that there is a significant amount of travel among the rural communities, stakeholders and social service workers believed that the majority of the transportation challenges within Fresno County involved trips within Fresno and from rural communities to the urban area.

Four Measures of Transportation Disadvantage

Transportation disadvantage can be measured in a number of ways. It can be measured as the ability to get to the places one needs to go, modal choice (based on the availability of a vehicle and licensed driver in the household), proximity to a public transit stop or the ability to utilize transportation services available.

Perceived Transportation Disadvantage

☒ The survey of transportation disadvantaged populations explored all of these factors. However, it began by asking a question about perceived transportation challenges faced by the respondent and their household. The distribution of responses is shown at the right.

A quarter of respondents experience no transportation challenges – they say that they are always able to get to the places they need to go. Another 32% say they are usually able to get to the places they need to go. **So 57% of respondents feel their transportation needs are reasonably met.**

The other 43% of respondents face varying levels of difficulty getting to the places they need to go. Thirteen percent (13%) say that many times someone in their household is not able to go where they need to go because of lack of transportation, and another 17% say that this is sometimes the case. A final group, 14% of respondents, say that they can generally get to their destination but that it takes a long time.

The distribution of responses is very similar between rural and urban respondents. Neither group perceives itself to be significantly more disadvantaged than the other.

♦ The option regarding "taking a long time" was included because it is a circumstance we heard a great deal about during the initial stakeholder interviews. For example, stakeholders noted that clients who needed to come from rural communities to Fresno for a brief medical or social service appointment had to spend an entire 10 hour day to do so. Even within Fresno, it was noted that the need to transfer and unreliable transfer connections could make relatively short trips a lengthy undertaking.

Transportation Dependency
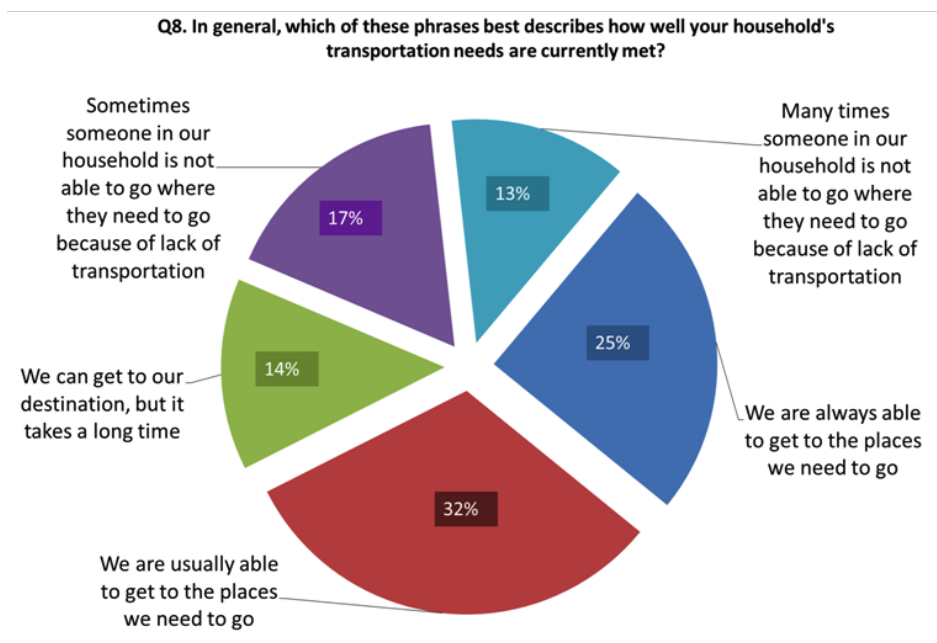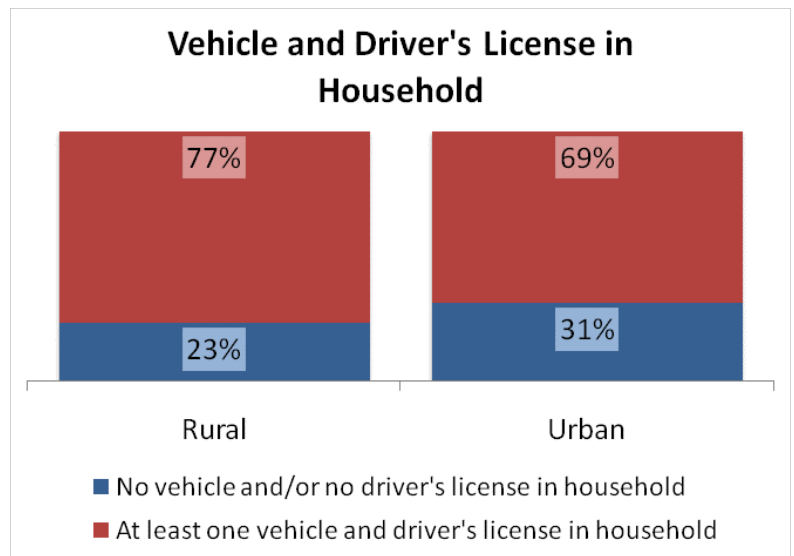
☒ Survey respondents were asked how many working vehicles were available for use in their household and how many licensed drivers there are. As the chart at the right shows, 23% of respondents from rural communities and 31% from the urban area live in households which lack either a vehicle or a licensed driver.

Not surprisingly, these tend to be found primarily among the lowest income households. Among households with incomes of under $10,000, 48% lack either a vehicle or a licensed driver.

Figure 7 Vehicles & Drivers in Household

Vehicle and Driver's License in Household

- ■ No vehicle and/or no driver's license in household
- ■ At least one vehicle and driver's license in household

Another way to look at the option to drive is to compare the number of licensed drivers in the household to the number of available vehicles. The table at the right makes this comparison. Each cell represents the percent of the total sample with a specific combination of

Having Drivers and Vehicles Available to the Household

Q6 Q7 Do you have a valid driver's license? How many others in the household have a valid driver's license?

Q5 How many working vehicles does your hoousehold have use of?	None	One lic driver	Two lic drivers	Three or more lic drivers	Total
No vehicles	12%	7%	3%	1%	23%
One vehicle	3%	19%	13%	6%	41%
Two vehicles	1%	3%	10%	8%	22%
Three or more vehicles	1%	1%	4%	9%	15%
Total	17%	30%	30%	24%	101%

vehicles and drivers in their household.[1] We can sum the possibilities into three general categories:

- Households with no vehicle or no licensed driver. 28% of households fall into this category (the total of the blue cells above) and are thus relatively dependent on transportation services or rides with others.
- Households with fewer vehicles than licensed drivers. 27% of households fall into this category with 13% having two licensed drivers and one vehicle, 6% having three or more licensed drivers and one vehicle and 8% having three or more licensed drivers and two vehicles. These households share vehicles. Hence the option of driving exists, but not for everyone at once.
- Households with at least one vehicle per driver. 46% of households fall into this category – these households can be assumed to have the choice of driving to meet their transportation needs.

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[1] The table sums to 101% due to rounding percentages to whole numbers. This is not significant.

Figure 8 Transportation Dependency

Transportation Dependency (Q5-Q7)
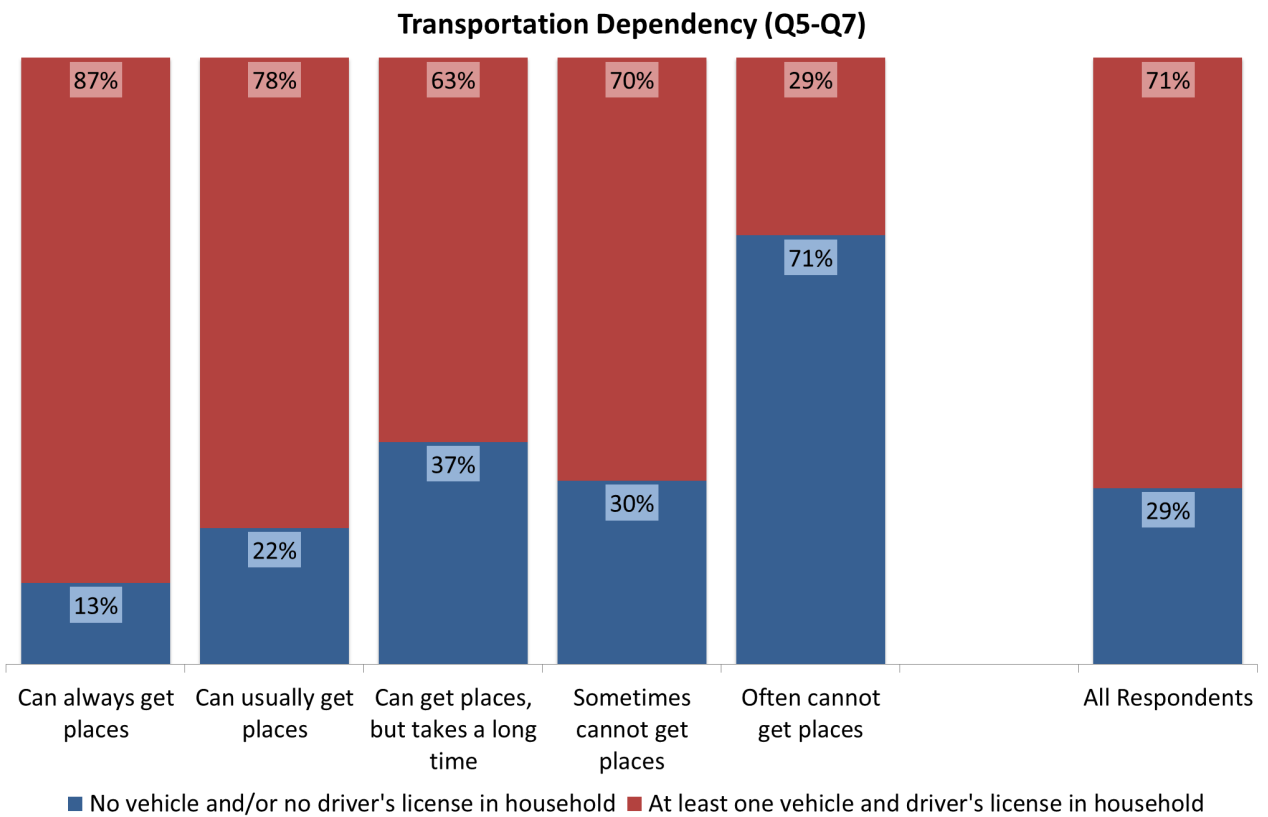
☒ The chart above combines the measures of Transportation Dependency and Perceived Disadvantage. Clearly those who say they often cannot get to the places they need to go are much more likely to be without a vehicle or licensed driver in the household (71%) than any of the other groups. Those who say they sometimes cannot get where they need to go or can get there but it takes a long time are also significantly more likely to lack a vehicle or licensed driver.

However, even among those who say they can always or usually get where they need to go, there are a significant number of persons who lack either a vehicle or driver's license. In the "Mode Usage" section, we will explore how these individuals travel.

Figure 9 Meeting Transportation Needs

The e-survey asked social service workers if their clients are able to meet all of their transportation needs either using personal transportation or with existing public and human service transportation services. Twenty percent (20%) of respondents said that all of their clients can meet their transportation needs personally, while 26% said they can meet them using existing transportation services. More than half of respondents (54%) said that they have clients who are not able to fully meet their transportation needs fully with personal transportation resources or existing transportation services. This perception of social service agency case managers is partly due to the lack of awareness of existing services that are available for their clients.

Are clients able to meet transportation needs…?

All needs met personally 20%

Needs met by existing services 26%

Needs not fully met 54%
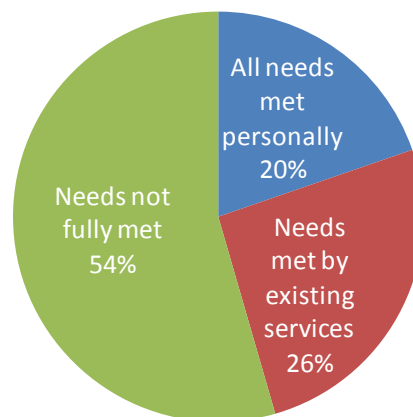
Access to and Awareness of Public Transit

Figure 10 Transit Access & Awareness

Respondents were asked if they know the location of the public bus stop nearest their home and if that stop is within walking distance. Three quarters (75%) of respondents said that they did know the location of the stop and 70% of those said it is within walking distance – generally within 15 minutes.

Urban - Rural Differences in Distances to the nearest Bus Stop

		Rural	Urban	All Respon-dents
Q20. Is the bus stop within walking distance of your home?	No, not in walking distance	47%	21%	30%
	Yes, in walking distance	53%	79%	70%
Q21 Minutes to bus stop if in walking distance	One to four minutes	7%	16%	14%
	Five to nine minutes	29%	28%	28%
	Ten to fourteen minutes	28%	29%	29%
	Fifteen minutes or more	36%	27%	29%

47% of rural respondents were not within walking distance of a bus stop compared to 21% of urban residents. 36% of rural respondents said it takes 15 minutes or more to walk to the bus stop compared to 27% for urban respondents.

Q23. How familiar are you with FAX bus service in the Fresno area?

	Rural	Urban
I don't know of such a service	49%	18%
I've heard of this service but have never used it	37%	19%
I've used this service at least once in the past six months	10%	27%
I use this service regularly	5%	36%

All respondents were also asked how familiar they are with FAX. The table above shows the distribution of responses for rural and urban respondents. Among urban respondents, most people (82%) had heard of the service, and 63% had ridden at least once in the past six months. More than a third (36%) said they used FAX regularly.

As would be expected among rural respondents, there was lower awareness for FAX. About half were familiar with FAX (51%). Of that group, 37% had heard of FAX but never used it, ten percent said they had used FAX at least once in the past month, while 5% said they use it regularly.

Rural residents only were also asked if they are familiar with bus service from their community to Fresno or Dial-a-Ride service in their home community. The table at the right shows how they responded. Two-thirds of respondents were aware of the rural bus routes (68%) and 40% had ridden the bus at least once. Seventeen percent said they use the rural bus routes regularly.

	Bus Service from your community to Fresno	Dial-a-Ride service in your home community
I don't know of such a service	32%	53%
I've heard of this service but have never	27%	31%
I've used this service at least once in the past six months	23%	10%
I use this service regularly	17%	6%

Awareness and usage was expectedly lower for the Dial-a-Ride services. Just under half of respondents (47%) had heard of the service. Sixteen percent had ridden at least once in the past six months and 6% said they are regular users of the Dial-a-Ride services.

Ability to Use Transit

Figure 11 Disabilities in Household

Q4. Do you or any member of your household...?

	Can always get places	Can usually get places	Can get places, but takes a long time	Sometimes cannot get places	Often cannot get places	All Respondents
Have a disability that prevents them from using public transportation independently	2%	11%	7%	4%	6%	6%
Have a physical disability that keeps them from getting to the bus stop	9%	8%	18%	6%	8%	9%
Use a wheelchair, scooter, or walker	10%	12%	4%	12%	5%	9%
Have a vision impairment or other disability that prevents them from driving	12%	15%	16%	19%	16%	15%

☒ Various barriers limit an individual's transportation options. These include disabilities that prevent a person from driving or using public transportation, as well as non-physical barriers such as language or fear.

Respondents were asked if anyone in their household has one of various types of disabilities. Seventy percent (70%) said that no one in their household had any of the disabilities described.

The chart above shows the percent of respondents in each "perceived disadvantage group" and for the overall sample who said that someone in their household faces each of the challenges.

Vision impairments that prevent one from driving were the most commonly cited disability (15%). Use of a mobility device and a disability that keeps one from getting to the bus stop were each cited by 9% of the respondents. Only 6% of respondents said that someone in their household has a disability that prevents them from using public transit independently.

There is not a strong relationship between having a disability and perceived transportation disadvantage.
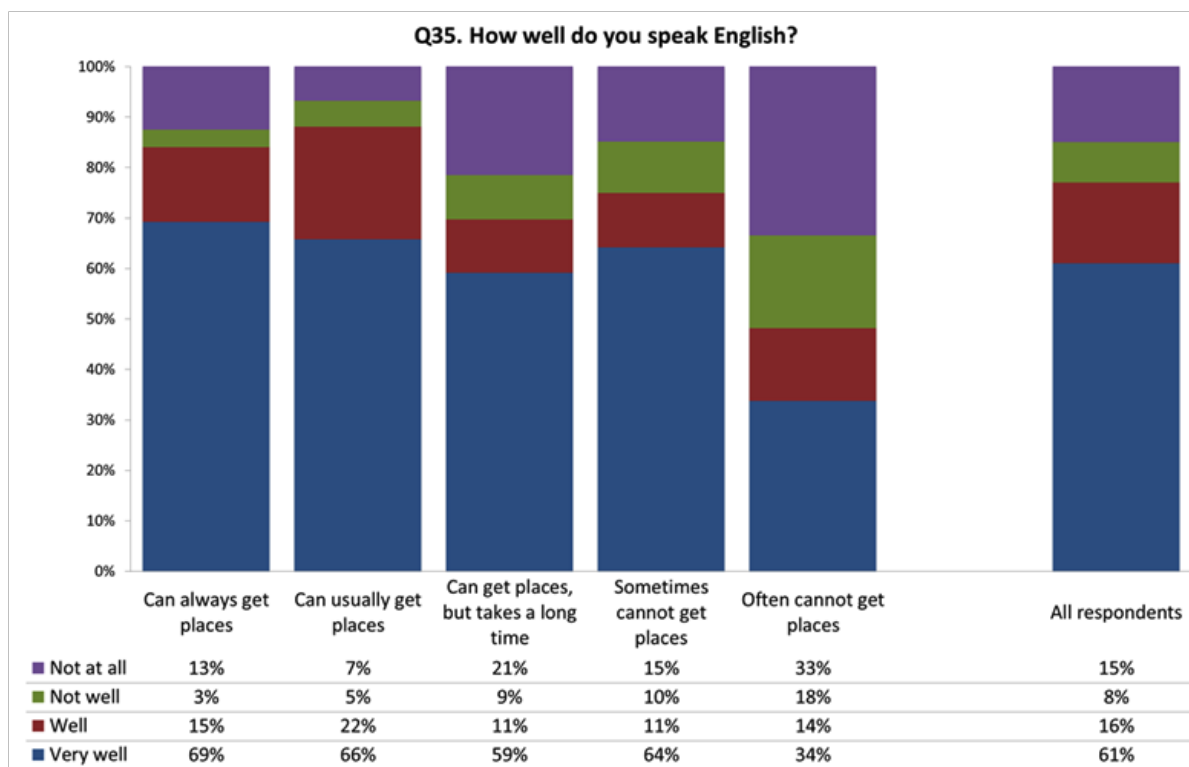
Figure 12 English Proficiency

	Can always get places	Can usually get places	Can get places, but takes a long time	Sometimes cannot get places	Often cannot get places	All respondents
Not at all	13%	7%	21%	15%	33%	15%
Not well	3%	5%	9%	10%	18%	8%
Well	15%	22%	11%	11%	14%	16%
Very well	69%	66%	59%	64%	34%	61%

☒ Another barrier to using public transit is limited English proficiency. The chart above compares the English proficiency of respondents in each of the "Perceived Disadvantage" groups and for all respondents. Those who experience difficulty getting places are much more likely to speak English "not well" or "not at all".

Respondents were also asked what language they speak at home. Respondents who say they often cannot get places are particularly likely to speak Hmong.
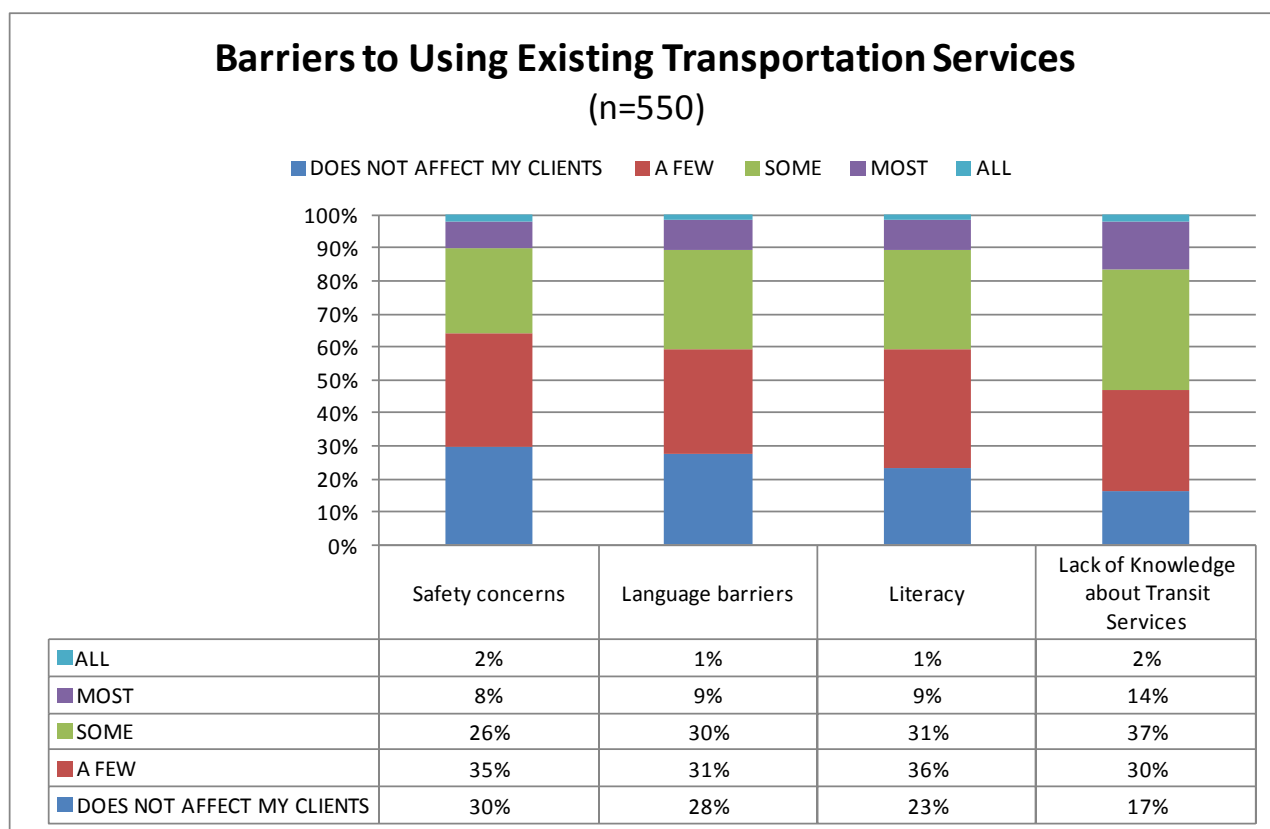
🔴 As the Phase I report (Appendix 3) described, stakeholders commented on a number of barriers that they believed kept people from using public transportation.

• Excessive travel time and limited schedules are often a barrier to utilization of fixed route services. This was true in both rural areas and in Fresno.

- Safety was an issue for many stakeholders – primarily safety walking to and waiting at the stop for youth and elderly persons.
- Limited English proficiency and literacy were seen as barriers for many potential transit users.
- Lack of transportation information may be the greatest barrier to use of existing services. Repeatedly we encountered stakeholders who were not familiar with innovative transportation services that have been implemented in Fresno County. Simultaneously, these agencies told us that they and their clients are confused even by the existing service network of which they are aware – both rural and urban.

⌫ Social Service workers who participated in the e-survey were asked about the various barriers identified through the stakeholder interviews. The chart below shows the distribution of answers to the question "For how many of your clients do the following barriers prevent them from accessing the available public and human services transportation options?"

Figure 13 Barriers to Use of Existing Transportation Services

Barriers to Using Existing Transportation Services
(n=550)

	Safety concerns	Language barriers	Literacy	Lack of Knowledge about Transit Services
ALL	2%	1%	1%	2%
MOST	8%	9%	9%	14%
SOME	26%	30%	31%	37%
A FEW	35%	31%	36%	30%
DOES NOT AFFECT MY CLIENTS	30%	28%	23%	17%

- Safety concerns (primarily with getting to or waiting at bus stops) were raised in several stakeholder interviews. In the e-survey, 36% of respondents said that safety concerns impact some to all of their clients (some 26%, most 8%, all 2%).
- 40% of respondents to the e-survey said that language barriers prevent some to all of their clients from accessing transit services. The primary languages spoken by clients are Spanish and Hmong. However, respondents also cited smaller pockets of Punjabi, Vietnamese, Armenian, Russian and several other languages.

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) appears to be a particular problem in rural areas. Among e-survey respondents who work primarily with rural clients, they report an average of 53% of their clients who have LEP. Among those working primarily with urban clients, the mean percent reported is 38%.
- Literacy is another major language related barrier. 40% of respondents to the e-survey said that literacy is a barrier for some to all of their clients (some 31%, most 9%, all 1%).
- The most prevalent barrier cited by social service workers is lack of information about transit services. As the chart above shows, among respondents to the agency e-survey, 16% said lack of information is a barrier for most (14%) or all (2%) of their clients, while another 37% said it is a barrier for some.

Current Mode Usage

☒ Respondents were asked two questions about how they currently travel. If they were employed or students, they were asked how they most often travel to work or school. All respondents were asked how they had traveled to their most recent medical appointment.

The chart below looks at the various ways respondents travel to work and compares this to the American Community Survey (ACS) for journey to work among the Fresno County population.

Figure 14 Commute Mode Compared to ACS

Survey Compared to ACS for Mode to Work (Fresno County)

	All Employed Respondents	ACS
■ Drive alone	36%	80%
■ Drive/ride with other passengers (carpool, vanpool)	27%	12%
■ Ride the bus (FAX, Rural Transit or Clovis Stageline or Dial a Ride)	19%	1%
■ Walk	6%	2%
■ Other*	12%	4%

*Ride in a social service program bus or van (3%, such as EOC or CVRC), Bike (6%), Other (3%)
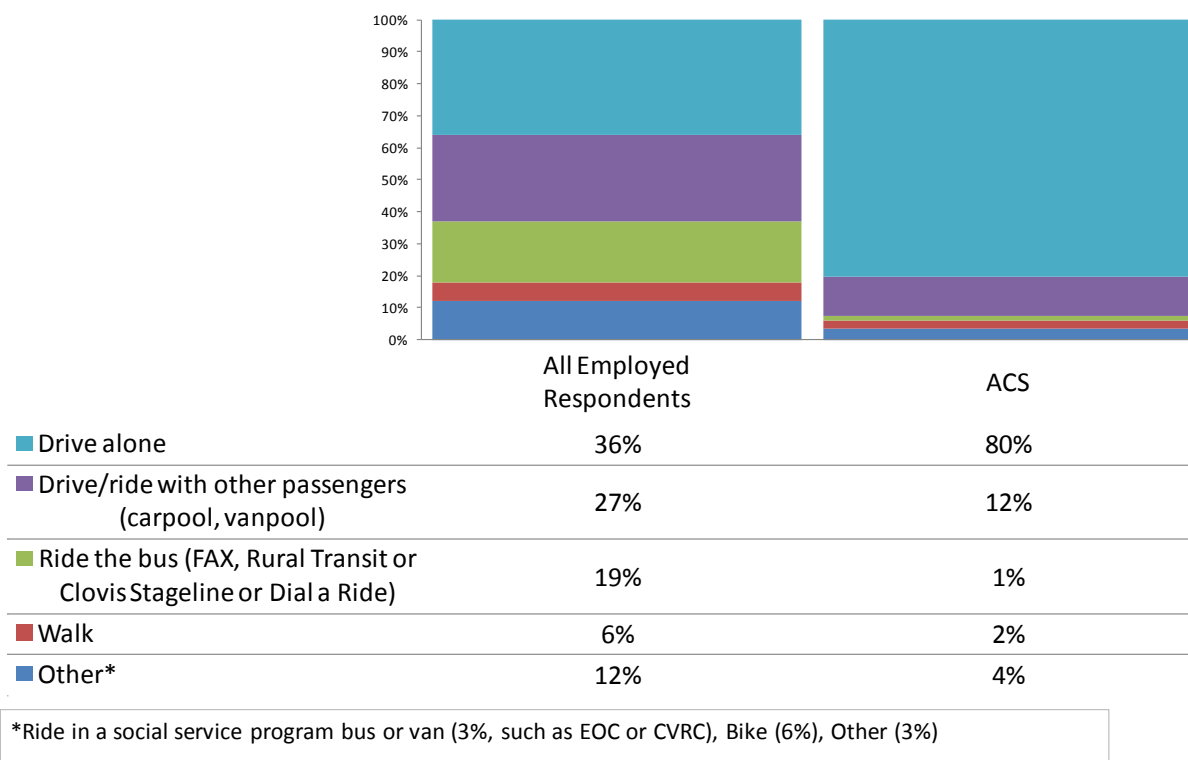
Just over a third (36%) of respondents drive alone to work. This is less than half the rate of driving alone found among the general population (80%).

Most of the difference is found among riders who carpool and those who use public transit. More than a quarter of respondents share a ride (27%) – either driving others or getting a ride with others. This is twice the level of carpooling found among the general population. Nearly one in five (19%) use public transit to get to work - making them <u>19 times</u> as likely to use transit to commute as the general public.

A significant number walk (6%) or bike (6%) to work, while 3% use social service transportation.

<p style="text-align:center">Figure 15 Mode to Work or School</p>

Mode to Work or School

	Can get around, but lack car or license or both	Can get around and have car and license	Have challenges getting around and lack car or license or both	Have challenges getting around but have car and license
Ride the bus***	10%	15%	31%	13%
Use Dial-A-Ride*	2%	2%	1%	0%
Ride in a social service program bus or van**	2%	2%	3%	4%
Drive alone	14%	37%	0%	32%
Ride in a Vanpool	12%	2%	13%	10%
Get a ride with someone (carpool)	14%	16%	13%	15%
Drive with other passengers (carpool)	0%	14%	0%	16%
Walk	33%	3%	31%	4%
Bike	12%	7%	0%	4%
Take a Taxi	0%	0%	6%	0%
Other	0%	5%	1%	4%

*Rural Transit, HandyRide or Clovis Roundup   **Such as EOC or CVRC   ***FAX, Rural Transit or Clovis Stageline

We noted previously that a number of respondents from households that lack a vehicle or a licensed driver nevertheless say that they can usually or always get to the places they need to go. The next chart looks at the modes these individuals use for work and school trips.

The first two columns show the modes used by individuals who said they can always or usually get where they need to go. The yellow column shows people who lack a vehicle or driver's license in the household while the green column includes those who have at least one vehicle and driver.

Among those lacking a vehicle/driver, a third (33%) walk to work or school, while a quarter (26%) carpool or vanpool. Note that 14% say they drive alone – despite having no vehicle or license in their household. Presumably they drive someone else's vehicle or drive without a license. Among this group that feel their transportation need are reasonably well met, only 10% use public transit.

The second and third columns show the modes used by individuals who feel their transportation needs are not as well met – they say there are some or many times when someone in their

household cannot get where they need to go, or that they are able to go but it takes a long time. The pink column includes individuals with no vehicle or licensed driver in the household, while the blue column includes those in households with at least one vehicle and driver.

Among the group lacking a driver (pink), 31% walk and a similar number (31%) ride the bus. Twenty six percent get a ride or vanpool and 6% use a taxi. They are using a variety of alternate modes of travel, however these modes are not meeting all of their trip needs.

Mode to Medical Appointment

	Can get around, but lack car or license or both	Can get around and have car and license	Have challenges getting around and lack car or license or both	Have challenges getting around but have car and license
Rode the bus**	28%	5%	34%	21%
Use Dial-A-Ride*	19%	0%	6%	4%
Drove myself	14%	55%	1%	31%
Got a ride with someone	24%	33%	25%	34%
Walked	12%	2%	25%	4%
Biked	4%	2%	3%	3%
Took a Taxi	0%	0%	0%	2%
Other	0%	3%	6%	3%

*Rural Transit, HandyRide or Clovis Roundup   **FAX, Rural Transit or Clovis Stageline

Figure 16 Mode to Medical Appointments

The chart above provides a similar analysis for medical trips. Since this question was asked of all respondents (rather than just those who were employed or students), it includes a wider sample.

Among groups without the option of driving (yellow and pink), large shares (47% and 40%) used public transit (bus or Dial-a-Ride) for their most recent medical appointment.

The highest level of bus ridership is among those who say they have challenges getting where they need to go and lack the option of driving. Among this group, 34% used the bus for their last medical appointment. Among the group who can get where they need to go without a vehicle (yellow), 28% rely on the bus to get to medical appointments. Even among those with transportation challenges who do have a vehicle/driver in the household (blue), 21% rode the bus to their last appointment.

The highest level of Dial-a-Ride usage (19%) is among those who lack the option of driving but say that they can generally get where they need to go. Much smaller percentages of the respondents facing transportation challenges either with or without vehicles/drivers (pink and blue columns) use Dial-a-Ride.

As with commuting to work and school, there is a high level of ridesharing for medical trips. A quarter or more of each group indicated that they got a ride to their last medical appointment. Among the segments without a vehicle/driver, a third got rides.

Figure 17 Mode Use by Social Service Clients

Use of existing transportation modes by agency clients

(n=490 front line agency staff)

■ ALL ■ MOST ■ SOME ■ A FEW ■ NONE ■ DON'T KNOW

	Drive	Get Rides	Vanpool	FAX	Handy Ride	Clovis Stage	Covis Para	County Rural Route	County DAR	HS Agency	EOC	Other
DON'T KNOW	11%	14%	45%	22%	49%	49%	53%	50%	58%	51%	58%	56%
NONE	3%	3%	33%	12%	23%	29%	29%	18%	20%	38%	26%	8%
A FEW	32%	15%	9%	15%	13%	11%	8%	17%	11%	6%	10%	16%
SOME	34%	40%	9%	28%	12%	9%	8%	11%	8%	4%	5%	14%
MOST	19%	27%	4%	22%	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%	%	4%
ALL	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
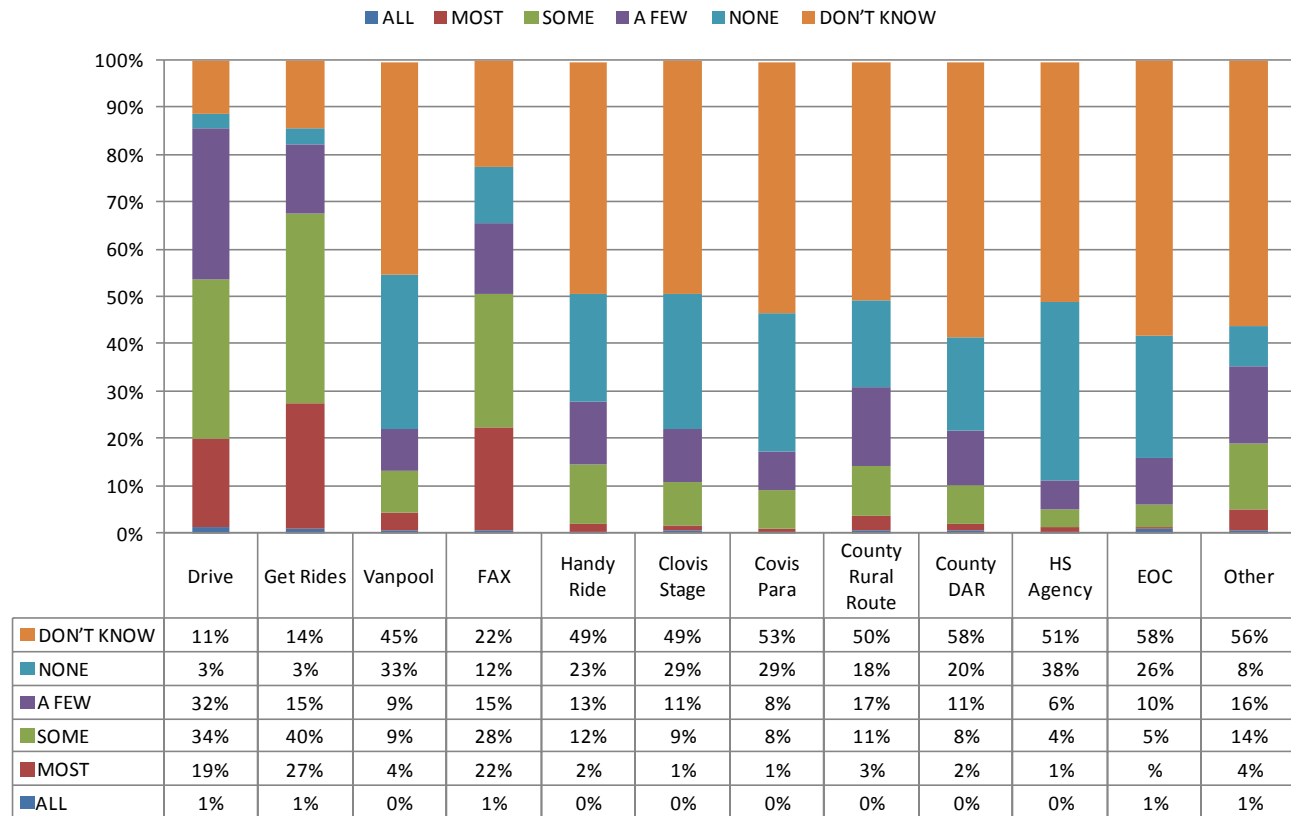
🏷 In the e-survey of front line Social Service Workers, respondents were asked about the transportation modes used by their clients. The chart above shows their estimates of how many of their clients use each mode. The most common mode appears to be getting a ride: 28% of respondents said most or all of their clients get rides, while 40% said some do. The next most common modes are FAX and driving alone with fairly similar numbers.

When it came to utilization of public transit services and human service transportation, half or more of the respondents said that they didn't know if clients used these transportation modes.

Factors Which Contribute to Perceived Disadvantage

❌ We've discussed one factor which contributes to perceived transportation disadvantage – not having a vehicle or driver in the household. The study explored other factors that may be related to perceived disadvantage.
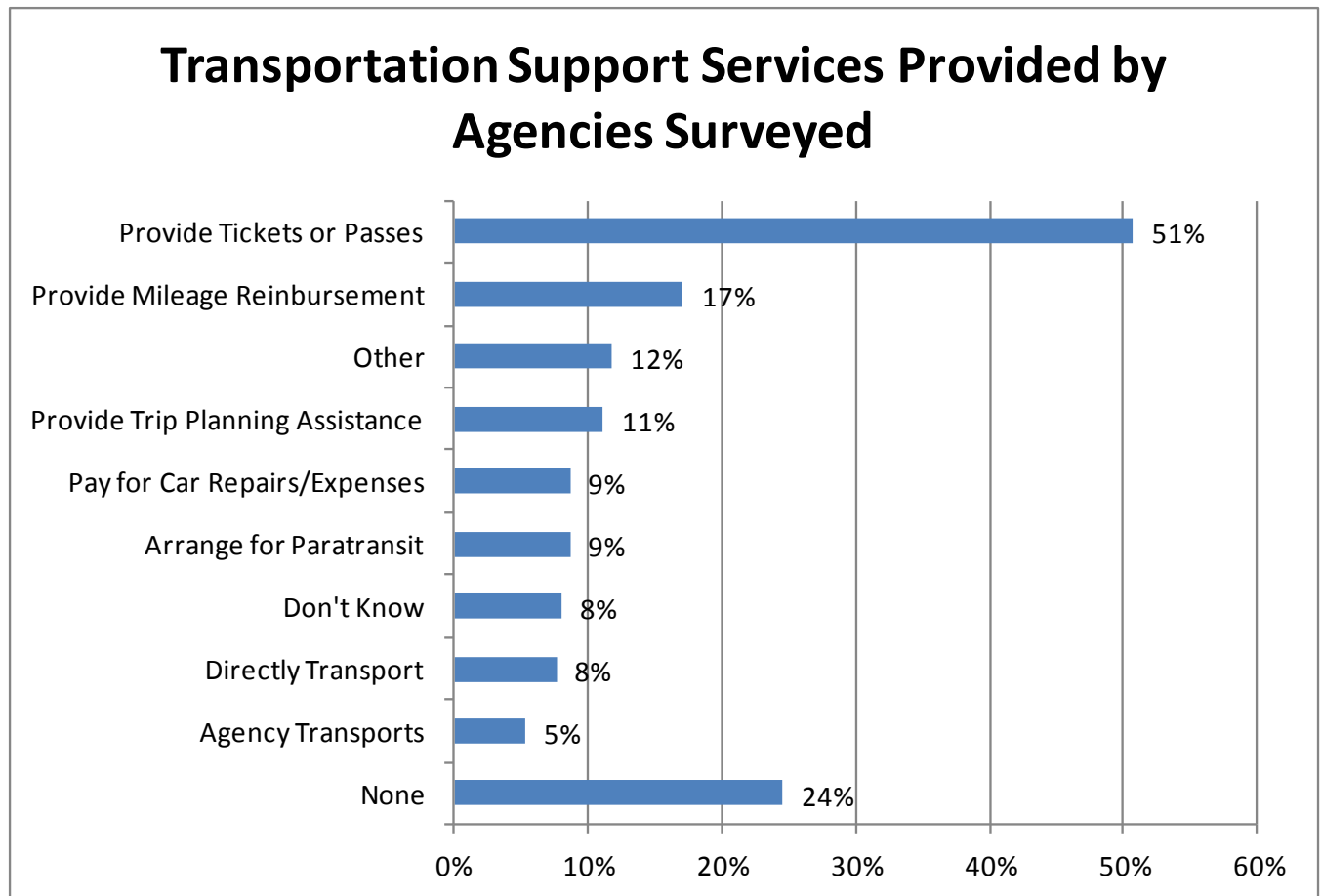
Employee and Student Status (Q9-Q13)

	Can always get places	Can usually get places	Can get places, but takes a long time	Sometimes cannot get places	Often cannot get places	All Respondents
Not employed, not a student	49%	57%	63%	64%	59%	57%
Higher education student, not employed	8%	7%	17%	8%	9%	9%
Higher education student, employed	4%	6%	9%	6%	0%	5%
High school or middle school student	4%	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%
Employed part time (seasonally), not a student	7%	7%	3%	5%	15%	7%
Employed part time (year round), not a student	6%	4%	1%	5%	2%	5%
Employed full time, not a student	22%	17%	7%	11%	13%	16%

- The groups which perceive themselves to be the least transportation disadvantaged (can always or usually get where they need to go) are the groups most likely to be employed (32% always and 27% usually). Likely the employment has provided them with the resources to secure transportation options.
- Women made up 60% of our sample, but 72% of the group that said that members of their household often cannot get where they need to go.
- Asians made up 19% of the respondents, but 38% of the group that said that members of their household often cannot get where they need to go. Reflecting this fact, Hmong speakers made up 16% of the sample, but 38% of the most transportation disadvantaged group.
- Individuals who speak English not at all or not well made up 23% of the total sample, but 51% of the most transportation disadvantaged group.
- Those in the most transportation disadvantaged group are the most likely to know the location of the nearest bus stop and much more likely than the overall sample to use public transportation. Of the group that says someone in their household often cannot get where they need to go, 42% use FAX, 39% use Rural Transit and 12% use Dial-a-Ride regularly.
- The group which includes the highest proportion of fixed route transit users is the group that says they can get places but it takes a long time. Among this group 45% use FAX regularly and 44% ride rural transit regularly.

Transportation Subsidies

Transportation Support Services Provided by Agencies Surveyed

Category	Percentage
Provide Tickets or Passes	51%
Provide Mileage Reinbursement	17%
Other	12%
Provide Trip Planning Assistance	11%
Pay for Car Repairs/Expenses	9%
Arrange for Paratransit	9%
Don't Know	8%
Directly Transport	8%
Agency Transports	5%
None	24%

In the e-survey of social service agencies, more than half of respondents said that their agency provides tickets or passes to clients. To a lesser extent, agencies also provide mileage reimbursement or other auto related transportation assistance.
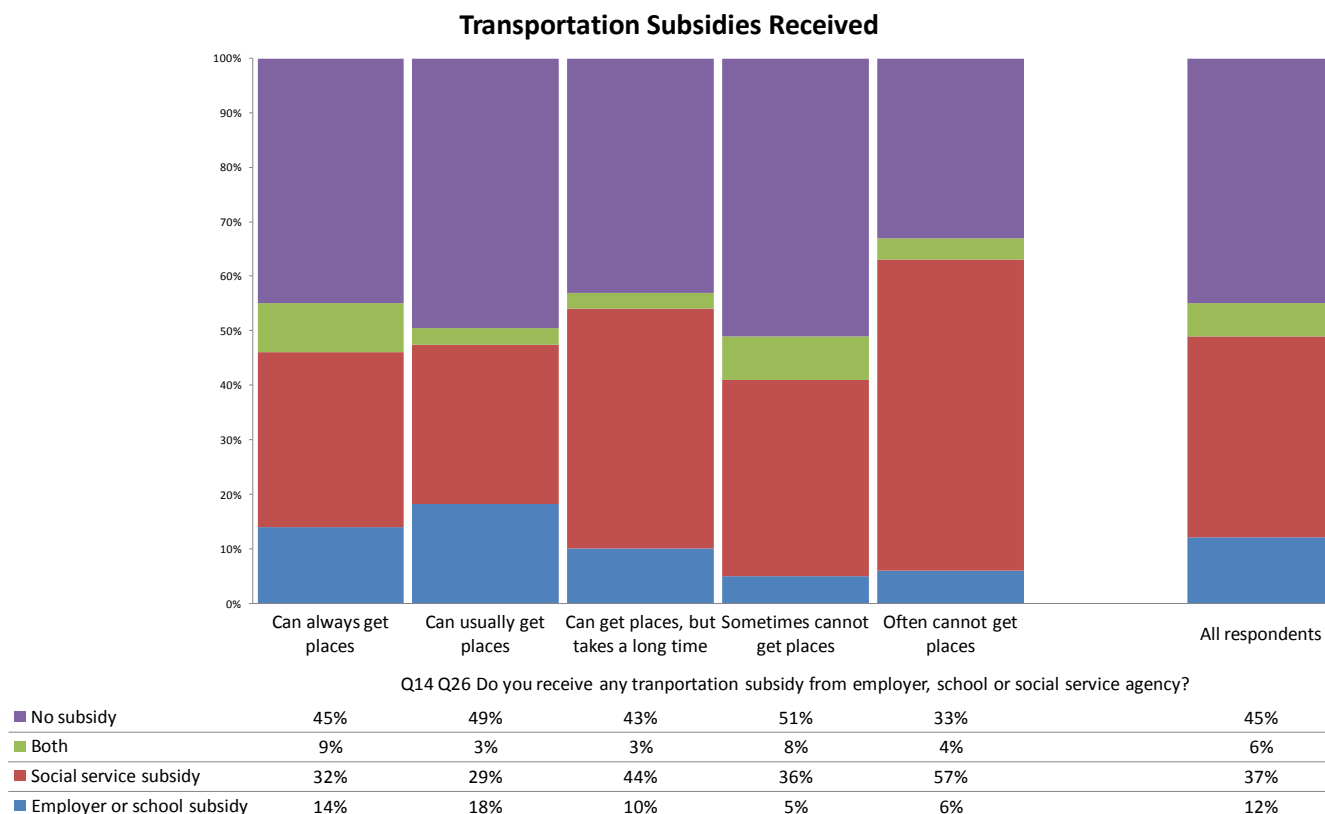
It was noted through the Inventory, that with the exception of CTSA services, the provision of bus tickets or passes, and sometimes mileage reimbursement is commonly reported by human service agencies as the manner in which they assist with their consumers' mobility difficulties.

Figure 20 Transportation Subsidies Received

Transportation Subsidies Received

Q14 Q26 Do you receive any tranportation subsidy from employer, school or social service agency?	Can always get places	Can usually get places	Can get places, but takes a long time	Sometimes cannot get places	Often cannot get places	All respondents
No subsidy	45%	49%	43%	51%	33%	45%
Both	9%	3%	3%	8%	4%	6%
Social service subsidy	32%	29%	44%	36%	57%	37%
Employer or school subsidy	14%	18%	10%	5%	6%	12%

☒ This high level of subsidy was also reflected in the survey of transportation disadvantaged populations.

More than half (55%) of respondents said they receive some type of transportation subsidy from an employer, school or social service agency. The chart above shows the distribution of subsidies by perceived transportation disadvantage. Bus passes and tokens were the most common types of subsidy cited.

Those who can always or usually get where they need to go are more likely to be receiving subsidies from employer/school or from both employer/school and a social service agency. Of course, we saw earlier that they are more likely to be employed so this makes sense.

Those who say they often cannot get where they need to go are the most likely to be receiving a social service agency subsidy (57%) or a subsidy of any kind (67%).

Getting Transit Information

☒ Knowing about the transportation services available is an important aspect of access to transportation. Respondents were asked how they currently get information about transit services and how they would like to get it.

Transportation Disadvantage and How People Currently Seek Transit Information

Q29. If you need information about public transportation services, how do you currently get it?	Q8. In general, which of these phrases best describes how well your household's transportation needs are currently met?					
	Can always get places	Can usually get places	Can get places, but takes a long time	Sometimes cannot get places	Often cannot get places	All respondents
I've never tried to get public transit information	31%	27%	9%	18%	17%	23%
I use the internet	22%	28%	24%	14%	12%	21%
I ask a friend or family member	13%	14%	20%	39%	23%	20%
I call the transportation agency	18%	14%	14%	12%	5%	14%
I look in the phone book	10%	10%	15%	9%	6%	10%
I ask a bus driver	4%	4%	12%	15%	14%	8%
I use the system's printed passenger guide	11%	1%	7%	7%	10%	7%
I ask a social service provider, case worker or social worker	3%	2%	6%	3%	8%	4%
Other	4%	8%	6%	5%	10%	6%

The chart above shows the distribution of how respondents currently get information based on their perceived level of disadvantage. The lower chart compares the information sources of rural and urban respondents. Note that the columns may sum to more than 100% as individuals could choose more than one source.

Among those who have attempted to get information (more than three quarters of all respondents), the most cited sources were the internet (21%) and word of mouth (20% family and friends, 4% social service agency).

How Urban and Rural Transportation Disadvantaaged Persons Currently Seek Transit Information

Q29. If you need information about public transportation services, how do you currently get it?	Urban / Rural Differences in seeking transit information		
	Rural	Urban	All respondents
I've never tried to get public transit information	32%	20%	23%
I use the internet	17%	23%	21%
I ask a friend or family member	24%	19%	20%
I call the transportation agency	15%	13%	14%
I look in the phone book	15%	9%	10%
I ask a bus driver	2%	10%	8%
I use the system's printed passenger guide	2%	8%	7%
I ask a social service provider, case worker or social worker	4%	4%	4%
Other	1%	8%	6%

The three transportation disadvantaged groups are more likely to be relying on word of mouth sources – including family and friends, social service agencies and bus drivers. This may be partially the result of language or literacy barriers.

Among urban respondents the internet was more utilized (23%). Rural respondents are most likely to rely on word of mouth (24% family and friends, 4% social service agency). Three other sources vie for second place – the internet (17%), calling the transportation agency (15%) and the phonebook (15%). Only 2% of rural respondents and 8% of urban respondents rely on printed passenger information.

The next set of tables look at how respondents say they would prefer to obtain transit Information. Again, the top chart looks at this issue in relation to the perceived transportation disadvantage categories and the second chart compares rural and urban respondents.

Figure 22 Desired Transit Information Sources

Transportation Disadvantage and How People Would Prefer to Obtain Transit Information

Q30. How would you like to get information about public transit services?	Q8. In general, which of these phrases best describes how well your household's transportation needs are currently met?					
	Can always get places	Can usually get places	Can get places, but takes a long time	Sometimes cannot get places	Often cannot get places	All respondents
By calling the transit agency on the telephone	21%	17%	27%	12%	8%	17%
In printed materials such as bus schedules or maps	17%	21%	13%	22%	23%	19%
On the internet	26%	36%	24%	13%	11%	24%
Displays or signs at the bus stop	9%	8%	9%	11%	23%	11%
From a social service provider, case worker, social worker or employer	7%	10%	10%	18%	12%	11%
From friends or family	21%	8%	17%	25%	23%	17%

The internet continues to be the preferred source for the largest group of respondents (24%), however 19% say they would like to get information from printed maps and schedules. Many respondents would like to continue getting information from someone they know: 17% family and friends and 11% social service agency or employer.

Preference for Seeking Transit Information

Q30. How would you like to get information about public transit services?	Urban / Rural Differences in seeking transit information		
	Rural	Urban	All respondents
By calling the transit agency on the telephone	22%	16%	17%
In printed materials such as bus schedules or maps	25%	18%	20%
On the internet	25%	24%	24%
Displays or signs at the bus stop	9%	11%	11%
From a social service provider, case worker, social worker or e	4%	13%	11%
From friends or family	15%	18%	17%

Seventeen percent would like to get information by calling the agency, while 11% opted for displays at the bus stop.

Those in the two transportation disadvantage groups that cannot always get where they need to go are more likely to prefer word of mouth sources, printed materials and displays at the bus stop.

Rural respondents split their preferences primarily between the internet (25%), printed materials (25%) and calling the transit agency (22%). Urban respondents were equally likely to say the internet (24%) but were more diverse in their other choices.

🧍 Input from Stakeholder Interviews

- Repeatedly we encountered stakeholders who were not familiar with innovative transportation services that have been implemented in Fresno County.
- Simultaneously, these agencies told us that they and their clients are confused even by the existing service network of which they are aware – both rural and urban.

Figure 23 Agency Familiarity with Transportation Programs

🔖 The e-survey of front line social service workers reinforced the findings of the stakeholder interviews with social service managers and others.

As the chart at the right shows, most respondents did not know about many of the excellent mobility options available in Fresno County.

Among respondents to the agency e-survey,

Familarity with Specialized Transportation Programs
(n=549)

■ Very familiar ■ Somewhat familiar ■ Not very familiar ■ Don't know about at all

Google Transit
Fresno COG vanpool subsidy
Farmworker Vanpool Program
FAX bus to Children's Hospital
FCRTA Countwide $5 DAR
CalWORKS transportation
Senior taxi subsidy

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

16% said lack of information is a barrier for most (14%) or all (2%) of their clients, while another 37% said it is a barrier for some.
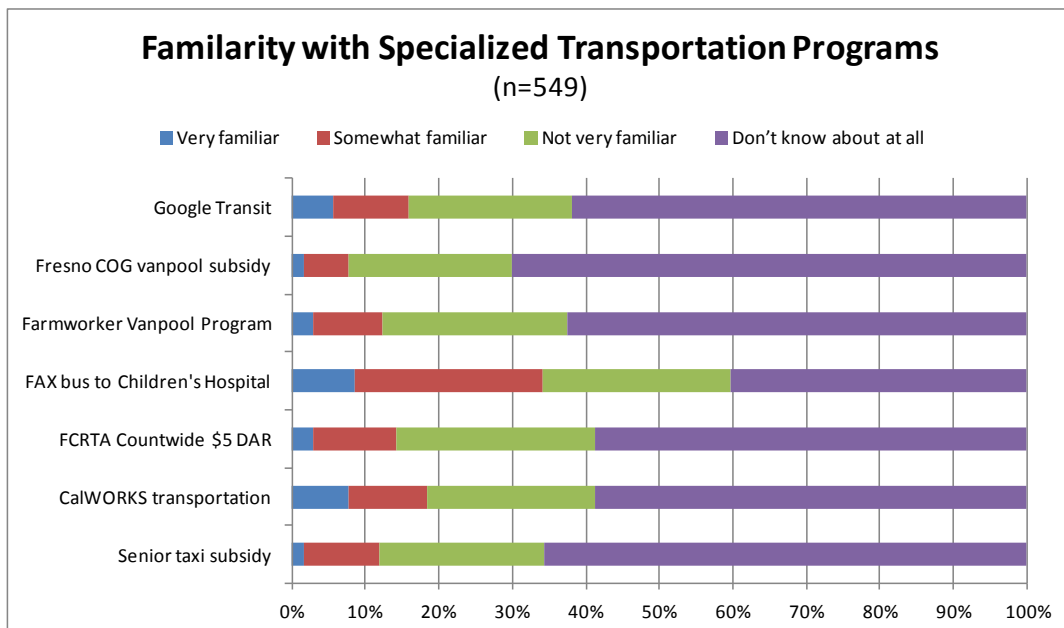
Conclusions

1. **Fresno County's population includes large segments likely to be transportation disadvantaged** due to low income (nearly one quarter of population lives below the poverty level); limited English proficiency (19% speak English less than very well); not having a vehicle (9.1% of households); or due to being young, elderly or disabled.

   There is a wide array of mobility services providing access to and from locations throughout Fresno County. Fixed route transit, demand response services, vanpools, social service transportation and an array of other mobility strategies have been put in place to serve the diverse needs of residents in both urban and rural areas.

2. **There is heavy utilization of public transit and carpooling among the study population.** In the intercept survey, 19% of all employed respondents ride the bus (22% if you include human service transportation) compared to 1% in the general population. 27% carpooled/vanpooled, compared to 12% of the population. Only 36% drove alone compared to 80% who drove alone. There is very good market penetration of public transportation among the employed target population, but ridesharing has even more market penetration.

   For those low income individuals surveyed who do not own an automobile or have a driver's license in the household, and report that they can always or sometimes get around, walking and ridesharing were the most prevalent modes. 33% reported walking, 14% riding with someone and 12% participate in a vanpool. A total of 14% participated in public or human service transportation with 12% utilizing public transportation and 2% riding on a social service program bus or van.

   For those reporting difficulty getting around and lacking a car or license or both, 31% walk but 35% utilize public transportation or a social service program bus or van to medical appointments.

3. **Social Service agencies are actively engaged in subsidizing transportation for their clients**, as well as providing transportation for the most difficult to serve. More than half of the study population receives a transportation subsidy from a social service agency, school or employer. Both the social service e-survey and the inventory show that major social service providers are purchasing transit passes for their clients as well as providing other types of transportation subsidies.

4. **There are important partnerships in Fresno County that facilitate mobility for the transportation disadvantaged**. In Fresno County, there are exemplary partnerships that provide an array of mobility services. Just a few of the examples include partnerships between FCRTA and FCEOC, FCRTA and CalVans, social service agencies and transit agencies to purchase transit passes, and Children's Hospital and FAX.

5. **Medical Programs and Social Service Agencies are providing services in rural communities**, making it easier for clients to access them. Sixty-two percent (62%) of rural residents surveyed get their medical care outside of Fresno. Many of those who lack access to a vehicle walked to their most recent medical appointment. This includes 12% among those who say they can

usually or always get around although they lack access to a vehicle, and 25% among those who say they have challenges getting around and lack access to a vehicle.

However, Fresno is still an important destination for many types of trips. Stakeholders interviewed in Phase 1 felt that getting to Fresno for medical appointments, work and job training was the major transportation challenge their clients faced.

6. **The majority of the study population (57%) says that their transportation needs are adequately met** through private transportation, carpooling and existing transportation services. This is equally true for rural and urban populations.

   With the target population purposely very low income (58% of the sample have incomes of less than $15K) and likely to be more transportation disadvantaged, the intercept survey found a significant majority (57%) self-reported that they are always or usually able to get to the places they need to go. Conversely, 43% have some difficulty in getting to the places they need to go with 14% stating they can get to their destination but it takes a long time, 17% stating that sometimes someone in the household is not able to get where they need to go because of a lack of transportation, and 13% stated that many times someone in the household is not able to get where they need to go because of a lack of transportation. It is the 43% that experience different degrees of mobility challenges, barriers or gaps that this study is addressing.

   In the Social service e-survey, 54% of case managers said that their clients' transportation needs were not fully met by personal transportation or existing transportation services. This perception was partly due to the lack of awareness of the mobility services that are potentially available to their clients.

7. **Being transportation disadvantaged is a continuum rather than an absolute status**. An individual's level of transportation disadvantage is the combined result of household circumstances, availability of a vehicle and driver's license, geography, language and gender.

   Having no vehicle and no driver's license in Fresno County tends to make getting places more difficult. Of our study population, 72% had at least one licensed driver and one vehicle in the household, while 28% lacked one or both.

   Of the 13% who often cannot get places they need to go, 71% lack either a vehicle or a licensed driver in the household. For individuals who self report they can always get places they need to go, only 13% do not own a vehicle or have a driver's license available.

   Even among those with incomes below $10,000, a slight majority (53%) have at least one vehicle and a driver's license in the household. With incomes of $25K or more, only 6% of households had no vehicle and/or no driver's license.

   In many households, however, a vehicle is shared among multiple drivers meaning that it may not be available at all times. In 27% of households, there are more licensed drivers than vehicles. Hence in slightly more than half of the study households (27% + 28%) there are likely to be times when a vehicle is unavailable to meet ones needs.

8. **Those who rely on public transit are more likely than others to perceive that they can't always get where they need to go or that it takes a long time.** There is a significant supply of mobility

services available to Fresno County residents. Public transportation and human service agency transportation does meet many of the needs of the target population. However, the service quality (from focus groups), lack of directness of travel (stakeholder interviews), and limited frequency and span of service particularly in rural areas (stakeholders and survey), make it difficult for some low income residents to get to places they need to go, even when they are aware of the services available.

9. **Ridesharing and walking are just as important to those without the option of driving themselves as public transit** – for both commute trips and medical trips.

   Among those who are employed or go to school and do not have a vehicle and licensed driver in the household, 25% get a ride or vanpool while 26% ride the bus or Dial-a-Ride. Note that a large number, 32%, walk to work or school.

   Among those traveling to medical appointments, getting a ride is the dominant mode of travel. In the intercept survey, 39% of all rural respondents and 30% of all urban respondents said that they got a ride to their most recent medical appointment. This likely involves mostly family members, but is still an important finding on access mode.

   Among survey respondents who reported being able to get where they needed to go despite not having a vehicle or driver's license in the household, 24% reported getting a ride with someone, 28% rode the bus, 19% used Dial-a-Ride and 12% walked to their most recent medical appointment. For those having challenges getting around without a car, 25% got a ride with someone to their appointment while 34% rode the bus, 4% used Dial-a-Ride and 4% walked.

   In the social service agency survey the most prevalent transportation mode cited was getting a ride – 28% of agency respondents said that most or all of their clients get rides, while another 40% said that some do.

   Carpools and vanpools have significantly more flexibility for certain types of trips than public transit. There would appear to be an opportunity to build on the already high level of ridesharing. Ridesharing services and matching could be extremely useful in filling many of the mobility gaps. Multimodal trip planners should include significant ridesharing functions that overcome language barriers and are trusted through references on social media.

10. **There is reasonably high awareness for public transit services among the transportation disadvantaged population; however it is based largely on word of mouth and information from drivers.** There is a desire for better sources of information – printed schedules, bus stop information displays, internet information and information from social service agencies – which would make the services easier to understand and access.

11. **Awareness among social service agencies for public transit and especially for mobility management services is very low**. Social service agency personnel are somewhat familiar with the fixed route services but don't necessarily have the informational tools to help clients with trip planning. Even worse, most social service agency survey respondents were completely unaware of important mobility programs such as the Countywide Dial-a-Ride, Vanpool Programs and the Senior Taxi Subsidy. The social service agencies should be a critical link between the

transportation providers and the transportation disadvantaged populations. However, they appear to lack the knowledge and informational tools necessary to serve this role. In stakeholder interviews, social service agencies expressed openness to procedures that they would participate in to keep better informed regarding available transportation services.

12. **Limited English proficiency, being unemployed and being female are factors which increase the likelihood of being transportation disadvantaged**.

    Individuals who speak English not well or not at all made up only 23% of our study sample, but 51% of the most transportation disadvantaged group. Hmong speakers are particularly challenged. They made up 16% of the sample, but 38% of the most disadvantaged group.

    Those who are employed are less likely to say that they can't get to the places they need to go – likely because employment provides them with the resources to afford transportation options.

    Women made up 60% of the study sample, but 72% of the most transportation disadvantaged group.

Next Steps

With the target population purposely very low income (58% of the sample have incomes of less than $15K) and likely to be more transportation disadvantaged, the intercept survey found a significant majority (57%) self-reported that they are always or usually are able to get to the places they need to go. It is the 43% that experience different degrees of mobility challenges, barriers or gap that this study is addressing.

The focus of the next steps in the Gaps Analysis and Service Coordination Study will be to develop strategies, policies and additional financial partnerships that will fill mobility gaps and address barriers to the 43% of the target population who experience degrees of mobility challenges in getting places the essential of living a healthy and productive life.

The issues of the directness of travel, service reliability and time it takes on urban trips are being addressed as part of the Fresno County Metropolitan Area (FCMA) Public Transportation Strategic Service Evaluation Project. The consultant Project Manager for the Gap Analysis and Service Coordination Study is also a subcontractor to the FCMA Strategic Service Evaluation project and will be advocating for service designs that improve public transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged populations.

The strategies and policies should build on the strong existing partnerships that exist in Fresno County. Strategies and policy recommendations should add value to these efforts. Because the supply of both public transportation and human transportation service is extensive in Fresno County, the list of potential priority strategies and policies to fill mobility gaps and remove barriers is not long. The four priority categories of strategies that are proposed for development in the Phase III of the Gap Analysis Study are described below.

1. *Innovative Communication Strategies:* Strategies to provide better communication of mobility options available to transportation disadvantaged populations is a high priority area of attention with relatively lows costs for implementation. This is an area of improvement that came through in all qualitative and quantitative data collection efforts. Efforts to provide more

inclusive information of individuals who do not speak English well or at all needs priority attention to address this gap and barrier.

For the transportation disadvantaged individual, this may be better information at the bus stop and simplified and regularly updated passenger guides. While efforts have been made in the past with social service agency case managers, both public transportation agencies and social service agency staff need new ongoing tools to facilitate information access on mobility services that can be regularly updated. There is an opportunity to define new information roles for human service programs on existing transportation services through the information strategies and tools developed in the Phase III of this project.

2. *Expanded Ridesharing Services*: The mobility strategies need to not only include better information on public and human service transportation, but also information on carpool and vanpool matching services that will be attractive to different language groups. There would appear to be significant opportunities for more vanpools for work trips, but strategies and policies to overcome barriers to utilization and formation need to be formulated and adopted. Since ridesharing is the most prominent mode for medical trips, there may be an opportunity is formalize the ridematching opportunities for both work and medical trips in rural communities. Again, cultural and language considerations will necessitate development of ridesharing strategies and policies that are beyond traditional "cookie-cutter" solutions.

3. *Enhanced Rural Mobility Choices/Services:* The lack of availability of many rural mobility services on weekends and limited schedules are often a barrier to the utilization of fixed route transportation. In order to address at least some of these gaps, there may be a need to go beyond the practice of providing subsidized transit passes for existing services to developing additional partnerships that leverage social service agencies' and medical institutions' transportation funding for targeted mobility improvements by FCRTA. The need for medical transportation, particularly to specialty appointments and court transportation from rural Fresno County to the City of Fresno are defined needs and a good place to explore building on existing partnerships.

4. *Enhanced Service Quality:* Finally, there is a need to improve service quality of existing mobility services. The focus groups and stakeholder interviews, in particular, pointed to a need for more of a customer service focus in mobility service delivery. This includes better sensitivity training of drivers and dispatchers on the needs of disabled and non-English speaking populations.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all mobility gaps and barriers that were reported during the research phase of the project. For example, there are spatial gaps in newly developing areas where there is no service at all. This is a complex issue at the interface of land use and transportation planning and should likely be addressed in the Regional Transportation Plan and not the Mobility Gap and Service Coordination Study. The four categories above are mobility gaps and barriers that can be effectively addressed as part of the Service Coordination and the strategies and tools suggested through Phase III of the Gap Analysis and Coordination study.